Internet connections in Leh

3871. SHRI KUSHOK THIKSEY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Internet Connections in Leh District is pathetically slow; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Laddakh has developed into prime tourist destination earning huge foreign exchange revenue to the nation and facilities like Internet connection would enhance the flow of tourist to this remote Himalayan region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) :

(a) No, Sir. However, on some occasions traffic congestions in the network may result in slow access.

(b) Laddakh is an important tourist centre both for domestic and foreign tourist. Improved telecommunications facilities like Internet connection will be helpful in development and promotion of tourism in this area.

Investment in Telecommunications

†3872. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India is trying to find out big capitalists for foreign investments to bring about a revolution in the field of telecommunications;

(b) if so, whether Government are serious about making a communication revolution in the country;

(c) if so, whether World Bank and other foreign investors are ready to invest in this sector; and

(d) if so, whether Government have any concrete proposal in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) India is trying to attract foreign investments in telecom sector in accordance with the Foreign Direct Investment Guidelines.

(b) Yes, Sir.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) A World Bank Funded Telecom Sector Reforms Technical Assistance Project is already under implementation. A large number of proposals envisaging foreign direct investment have been approved for the telecom sector during August 1991 to December 2000. A number of measures have been taken to facilitate and increase Foreign Direct Investment, like increase in the ceilings of Foreign Direct Investment in telecom sector, opening of various telecom services for the entry of private sector and strengthening of the Regulator.

Mobile phones in J & K

3873. MIRZA ABDUL RASHID : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that maximum telephone officers, operators, technicians were compelled and forced to migrate from Kashmir Valley and other far flung areas of Poonch, Rajouri and Doda under militancy threats;

(b) if so, whether Government would recruit locals, educated unemployed youths in this Department; if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in this age of communication revolution facilities of mobile telephones are not available till date in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) Yes, Sir. Only from Kashmir Valley.

(b) Requirements of Junior Telecom Officers, Telecom Technical Assistants and Senior Telecom Operating Assistants is under process in J & K based upon the requirements from time to time and as per the Recruitment Rules.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Expansion or fresh start of Cellular Mobile Telephone Service is not permitted at present by Private operators as well as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited in J & K on security considerations.